Privatisation of Telecom Facilities

1252. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to privatise the provision of basic telephone facilities in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the broad procedure to be followed in awarding the necessary licences;

(c) whether this proposal also involves allowing private companies, Railways, the Power Grid Corporation of India or any other agency to provide long distance, inter-city and inter-State telecom facilities and services; if not, what are the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government are already allowing or propose to allow private companies to provide international telecom facilities and services in competition with the Videsh Sanchar Nigam; if so what are the details in this regard;

(e) whether Government propose to set up an independent regulatory body for Telecoms to deal with allocation of radio frequency, telephone numbers and licences to provide services and ensure inter-connection of different networks and protection of customer interest; and

(f) if so, what are the necessary details therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Sir, Indian companies are allowed to supplement the efforts of DOT in providing basic telephone services.

(b) Tender have been floated inviting bids from registered Indian companies to provide basic telephone services in the country to meet the objectives of New Telecom. Policy 1994. The last date of submission of the tenders is 30th March, 1995. The tender document containing the detailed conditions, information and procedure for the tender are available on sale for Rs. one lakh and can be purchased upto 29th March, 1995.

(c) No, Sir. There long distance systems are meant only for their own use.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) The Government propose to set up an autonomous Telecom Regulatory Authority Body for ensuring fair competition and to protect consumer interest. Other responsibilities proposed to be given to this Body will include price regulation, technical compatibility and revenue sharing arrangement between different service providers, resolution of disputes between service providers, matters relating to quality of service and protection of customer interest.

Credit Cards for Postal Account Holders

1253. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a credit card system to postal account holders; if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) whether Government have negotiated with other Government agencies such as Railways or Electricity Boards to accept the postal credit cards; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Government have plans to introduce other schemes, besides distribution of mail, and if so, the details thereof?